

ISSUE #28

DECEMBER 2009

BAAM

**Boston Anti-
Authoritarian
Movement**

A General Anarchist Union in the Boston Area

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS! WE'RE
CELEBRATING A DECADE OF UPRISING
AND REBELLION!**

2000 - 2009, Ten Years In Review



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They said that in the year 2000 the world would end. But it didn't. The apocalypse never came. In the decade since then, people everywhere shook the pillars of a world where the most powerful 1% dominate and exploit the rest of us. That world will fall in time.

This December, we at BAAM are raising our mugs to the stunning displays of open defiance, inspirational anti-authoritarian revolts, popular insurrections, and mass movements of the past decade. This millennium began with a bang. From Argentina's December Uprising of 2001 to the Greek December Insurrection in 2008, people across the globe have countered corporate domination, hierarchy, poverty, and recession with open rebellion. As Naomi Klein writes, "It's taken a while (since Argentina), but from Iceland to Latvia, South Korea to Greece, the rest of the world is finally having its ¡Que se vayan todos! (They all must go) moment." Not only have workers and oppressed people discovered that we can take back our freedom through common action, but through the renaissance of independent media we've taught each other how to win and build better societies. We are students of revolution, and these

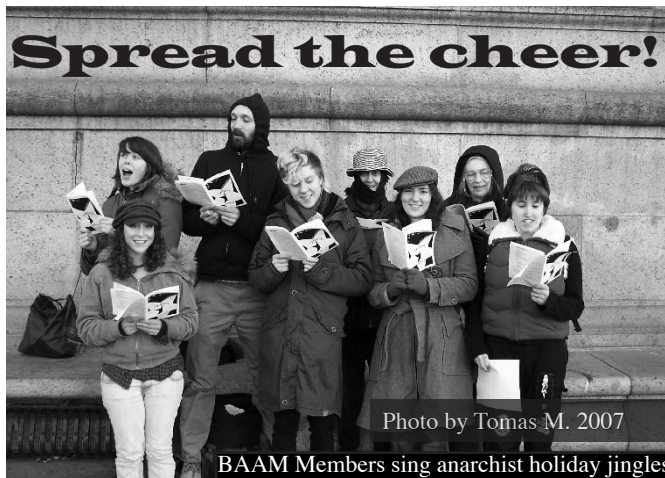


Photo by Tomas M. 2007

BAAM Members sing anarchist holiday jingles at the Boston Public Library in Copley. Radical Caroling, singing anti-capitalist, pro-worker, and otherwise revolutionary songs in shopping centers, is a BAAM tradition since 2002. Check the calendar for caroling dates this year!

are the lessons we've learned. These victories, and the disproportionate number of rebellions in the last decade, prove that anarchy is not only possible, it has been conceived, and its birth is just over the horizon. Sadly, we couldn't fit everything we wanted to here, but these revolts stood out to us. So enjoy the memory of the first ten years, and may we mark our next decade with full-blown revolutionary freedom. **For Anarchy: the harmony between personal liberty, community power, and collective well being.**

Health Care Reform and Abortion Access

BAAM health care correspondent, Nov. 20

As law-makers continue to work out health care reform, it's hard to figure out what to think, especially for those of us who don't believe the government will ever be able to solve our problems. This debate reinforces our prior knowledge that the government has little regard for the health and well-being of women, and that "representative democracy" simply does not work.

So here's the quick and dirty: in early November, democrat leadership in the House had a healthcare reform bill ready to put before a vote. Their #1 priority was to get this bill passed, regardless of what came with it. The bill does include some good things, including prohibiting charging more for people with "pre-existing conditions" like c-sections, abortion, cancer, etc. On the other hand, there's no public option, and the bill contains abortion funding restrictions. To get this bill passed, democrat leaders allowed a vote on an amendment proposed by anti-choice democrat Bart Stupak,

which extends the current ban on funding for abortion to the entire health care pool.

In the healthcare reform bill, under the Capps Amendment, plans within the health care exchange "pool" would include those which cover abortions and those which don't. No public money would go towards abortions, but it would be paid for, and this would simply mean doing the accounting so that it is technically the private money (that which comes from an individual or employer) being put towards the abortion. However, in the Stupak Amendment, NO insurance plan that is available for those receiving assistance from the government can offer abortion coverage. So no one who gets government subsidies for healthcare (it is estimated that over 80% of people who get their health insurance through the exchange will be eligible for subsidies) will have abortion covered in their plan, even if they pay for it with their own money. The exceptions to this are cases where the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest, or where the woman's life is in danger. However, under the current Hyde Amendment, which has these same exceptions in place for the ban on Medicaid funding of abortion, a very tiny percentage of these are

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The BAAM Newsletter

is the monthly publication of the Boston Anti-Authoritarian Movement, a general union of Boston anarchists. Our publication aims to spread anti-authoritarian ideas and practices, and to report on the social struggles of workers, tenants, students, radicals, and others resisting the repression of the state, bosses, landlords and banks.

BAAM Subscriptions

In striving to make our publication sustainable, we are offering yearly subscriptions, sent to your door for the sliding scale cost of \$12-15. We also provide free email subscriptions. Email Jake at Trenchesfullofpoets@riseup.net for more information, or send checks or well-concealed cash to:

BAAM c/o Boston ABC, PO Box 230182, Boston, MA, 02123

Issue Editors
Adrienne, Sublett, Laila

Issue Designers
Jake Carman, Jeff Reinhardt

Submissions

We accept submissions for our paper! Email articles, photos, events, letters, etc to Jake at Trenchesfullofpoets@riseup.net

actually paid for. There is the option to buy an additional “abortion rider” with your insurance. Yeah, because people really plan ahead for unplanned pregnancies, fetal abnormalities, etc.

Knowing that the anti-choicers had enough votes to pass the Amendment, democrat leaders let it go to vote. Over 60 democrats voted for the Amendment (along with all the republicans) and it passed. The drama: Pro-life democrats said that they wouldn’t support healthcare reform unless the Stupak Amendment was part of it, so the rest of the Dems threw women under the bus. There were some pro-choice democrats, including DeGette (CO) and Schakowsky (IL) who spoke out against the Amendment and attempted to put their beliefs over the politics game. However, as the votes tallied up, and democrats realized the amendment would pass, they “allowed” the on-the-fencers to vote yes, playing it safe for upcoming elections. Just a short tangent—here’s how they say the system is supposed to work: people vote for the person who best represents their beliefs overall, hence the word “representative.” If they elect someone with prochoice leanings, tough cookies if they’re mad when this person votes pro-choice. But the reality is that more often than not, politicians run on ambiguous platforms and make decisions to the “center” to try and appease everyone, hoping that they will keep getting elected, and continue to not show a spine on any issue. Fantastic. While some of those who voted for the Amendment were playing the wishy-washy game, others were surprises—people who had a history of voting 100% pro-choice. Clearly they were so worried about the bill being passed that they sacrificed half of their constituency.

So remember those pro-life democrats who said they would vote yes on health care reform only if the Stupak amendment was attached? A bunch of them voted no on health care reform anyway. Oops Dems, you got duped. Health care reform was passed in the house, with the Stupak Amendment attached. Luckily, they voted down last minute anti-immigrant policies, which would have prohibited undocumented immigrants from purchasing insurance, and put a 5 year waiting limit on insurance for documented immigrants.

Now that you know why Planned Parenthood and NARAL have been sending you all those emails recently, and why NPR is actually talking about abortion, we can start to ask some critical questions. What I did not explain fully earlier is that restrictions on public funding of abortion have already existed in this country for 33 years. Women receiving insurance through the federal government, and women on state Medicaid in THIRTY FIVE STATES, do not have abortion care

covered. This constituent is mostly low-income women, women of color, young women, immigrant women, women in prison, and other marginalized groups. For these women, paying for an abortion means not paying for food, rent, medication, pawning their possessions, or having to go through with pregnancies that they do not want. So why is this issue just coming to the forefront now? Why do mainstream “pro-choice” organizations continue to push for health care reform with similar restrictions on public funding (and now hope for a “compromise” between the status quo and the Stupak Amendment, which would enforce even more restrictions)? Oh yeah, it’s because now this ban is affecting white middle class women. Now groups such as Planned Parenthood and NARAL have to speak up to protect the rights of those people whose voices are not marginalized in the mainstream. Luckily, some reproductive justice (reproductive justice: a perspective that addresses intersectional “isms,” as opposed to just “choice”) groups are not standing for this, and trying to bring to the forefront that the status quo (which limits access for low-income women) is already pretty terrible. They are calling for no compromise, and for the Capps Amendment (although hardly ideal) to be the absolute limit in terms of restrictions. Unfortunately these groups have a lot less support, visibility, and political clout than their mainstream sister organizations.

Back to politics—so now even more of us are screwed and that’s that? Nope, this is just the start. This was just the house vote. The vote will go to the senate in late December, and although we have not seen their version of the bill, there is potential for it to also include anti-abortion and anti-immigrant amendments. Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) told Politics Daily on Nov. 17th that he plans to introduce an amendment to the Senate bill similar to Stupak’s House amendment. When asked if his amendment would mirror the Stupak language, he said. “I think that’s a fair appraisal.” After that, the bills have to be reconciled, resulting in a final bill that goes to Obama.

By the way, none of this will go into effect until 2013. This is what democracy looks like?

So what can you do to help protect women’s access to abortion? You could contact your senators, and make sure they plan to vote against any abortion funding restrictions in the senate bill. Or, as we are in a unique position as anarchists to understand that relying on the government to fix our problems is pretty stupid, you can directly support access in the here and now by volunteering at, or sending money to your local abortion fund. Abortion Funds are grassroots organizations that provide direct service (a.k.a. mutual aid) to women who can’t afford abortion. This personal care and direct connection is something that the government will never offer through health care reform. For more info, visit <http://www.emafund.org/> or www.nnaf.org •

The Start of the Millenia: A Decade in Review

1999 Nov-Dec. The Battle of Seattle.



Anarchists burst into the public consciousness with US media coverage of their participation in confrontational protests against the World Trade Organization. The WTO attacks regulations that would protect workers, the environment, and public health, calling them “barriers to free trade.” Anarchists, anti-capitalists, and Seattle residents rioted and shut down the WTO talks, marking the birth of the modern North American Anti-Globalization Movement. Subsequent protests of global capitalism and US political parties have since rocked Quebec, Washington DC, Miami, New York, Denver, the Twin Cities, and Boston.

A Sketch of the Uprising in Algeria, 2001-2004

by James Herod

The insurrection in Algeria, beginning in April 2001 and continuing on for several years thereafter, was one of the most significant, but least known, revolts of the past decade. It was centered in, but not limited to, the predominantly Berber region of Kabylia in northeastern Algeria. The uprising was sparked by the murder of a young man being held in police custody, on April 18, 2001. The reaction was angry and massive. The insurgents attacked and sometimes burned police stations and vehicles across the region, as well as many government buildings, court houses, political party headquarters, and union halls. It was a comprehensive rejection of the established order, of institutionalized power. Most importantly, it was a total rejection of representative government. They destroyed election offices and burned ballot boxes. Then they organized boycotts of elections. In the May 2002 election participation was reduced to 1.8% in Kabylia.

They used road blockades, building occupations, sabotage, street fighting, general strikes, and mass demonstrations. They refused to negotiate with the government and denounced, expelled, or ostracized anyone

who did. They hammered out a common platform and issued a Code of Honor. One of their demands was that all state police had to leave the region. One item in their Code was that no one could accept a political position in an institution of power.

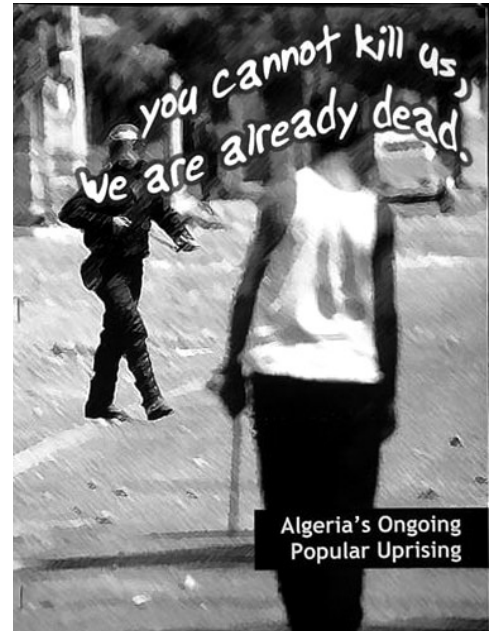
The most significant aspect of this uprising, however, was that it was based on horizontal self-organization. The insurgents revived the ancient tradition of village assemblies, the Aarsh (pronounced Aroush), and established them everywhere. Then they federated these structures regionally. It was by means of these assemblies that they coordinated the revolt.

One misconception about the revolt is that it was ideologically Islamic. It was not. The insurgents were as much against Islamic fundamentalists as they were against authoritarian socialists or Algerian nationalists. Another misconception is that it was strictly a Berber ethnic revolt. It was not. It was mostly a revolt against oppression. They tried to spread the insurrection to the rest of Algeria, but were only partially successful in places.

Sadly, the revolt never included workplaces. Perhaps this is one reason that the State was able to slowly wear the revolt down, and reestablish control and elections. But as of mid-2004 the fight was still going on in one form or another, making it one of the longest sustained revolts of the decade. (I have no information since then.)

Most of our information about this uprising

comes from the main source in English, an anthology compiled and published by Firestarter Press in 2004 (PO Box 50217, Baltimore, MD 21211), *You Cannot Kill Us, We are Already Dead: Algeria's Ongoing Popular Uprising*. It contains original documents, interpretative essays, a chronology, photos, an Algerian historical timeline, and so forth. There is also a small booklet in French by Jaime Semprun, *Apologie pour L'insurrection Algerienne*, half of which was translated into English. Both can be found with a Google search. •



by Jake Carman

Throughout the 1990s, capitalists held up Argentina as a shining example of how struggling countries could prosper if they accepted loans from and submitted to structural adjustment policies devised by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Until December 2001, Argentina was considered the most prosperous Latin American economy. However, throughout the previous years, unemployment grew, opposing governing parties sabotaged and weakened each other, and the banks were going bankrupt. With over 20% out of work,



Piqueteros, the unemployed workers movement, demanded work by blocking highways. When the government imposed a "corralito," preventing people from taking their money out of the failing banks, they lit the fuse.

On December 19th, the people revolted, and this time it was more than the unemployed, the precarious workers, and the slum-dwellers. Middle income people, terrified at the banking crisis, joined the poor on the streets of Buenos Aires, demanding the end of corralito and the resignation of President Fernando de la Rúa. After 2 days of street battles, the government fell. Popular assemblies sprang up in every Buenos Aires neighborhood, and

Piqueteros crippled the roads. While various leftist parties tried to claim the spontaneous rebellion as their own revolution, Argentinians, chanting "¡Que se vayan todos!" ("All of them must go!") went through five presidents in three weeks in a complete rejection of governmental structure.

While the political system dissolved, the economic issues were not solving themselves, so unemployed workers expanded on a trend that had begun in 1996. They seized shut down factories and began to produce. Of over 200 occupied factories, hotels, hospitals, schools, and other workplaces, most operated horizontally with no bosses. Workers com-

mittees served as the administration and everyone received fair and equitable pay. These “workers without bosses” found support from each other and from the unemployed and the neighborhood assemblies, who turned out to fight in defense of the factories when the bosses came back with police. A spirit of freedom and cooperation triumphed.

In early 2002, however, Duhalde assumed the presidency, and in 2003 Kirchner was elected. Both fought to stabilize Argentinean capitalism and state governance by repressing the people’s movements and superficially denouncing globalization to win support. As the political machine re-stabilized, the liberated factories came under increased attack. Many organized into the MNER (National Movement of Seized Enterprises) in an attempt to force the government to legalize their cooperatives. Others used Article 17 of the Constitution, which says that expropriations that benefit the public are legal. Though this law was meant for eminent domain, workers argued that their expropriations reduced unemployment. To this day, many of the occupied businesses continue to operate horizontally, without bosses.

Despite the horizontal, anti-authoritarian nature of the uprising, which rejected authority, bosses, and electoral politics and found solutions in popular assemblies and worker-run workplaces, it was not driven by anarchists. Anarchists participated in the rebellion, but their organizations were neither strong enough nor sufficiently widespread to effectively articulate the full complexity of their ideas or the lessons of their history to the masses. In the end, political forces succeeded in appeasing too many of the people with the same old electoral promises, restoring the “order” of capitalist competition and domination. Argentineans were able to seize the means of production, providing for their communities instead of the bosses, but they were unable to keep the power of democratic decision-making where it belongs, in the hands of the popular assemblies. •



The Oaxacan Rebellion

by Jake Carman

Oaxaca has a long tradition of resistance going back to the arrival of the Spanish. Strong anti-authoritarian currents exist, and it was Oaxaca that produced the first prominent anarchist protagonist of the 1910 Mexican Revolution, Ricardo Flores Magón. On June 14, 2006, 3,000 police attacked the teachers’ yearly strike and encampment in the main city plaza (Zócalo) of Oaxaca City, the state capital. This encampment was different from those of the past 25 years, as it called for a raise in the minimum wage for everyone in Mexico’s poorest state. When the police attacked, the people of Oaxaca came to the teachers’ defense.

Poor workers and Indigenous people flooded the streets of Oaxaca City, driving the police out and building barricades to keep them out. Then they went further. They ran out the politicians, occupied government buildings, radio and television stations, and created the Popular Assemblies of the People of Oaxaca (APPO), demanding the ouster of Governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz (URO) of the conservative Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). APPO assemblies sprung up all across the state. URO responded by raising paramilitaries from those he could convince to take up arms against the rebellion. Comprising anyone from cops to city councilmen, workers, and even judges, right-wing paramilitaries attacked the barricades by night with machine guns from pickup trucks. They sabotaged radio stations and abducted revolutionaries. In the face of violent repression, the people came out in mega-marches of up to 800,000. When paramilitaries evicted a women’s group from the State television station, people responded that night by taking over every commercial radio station. When vigilantes killed a rebel in an attack on occupied “Radio La Ley,” the people expanded their barricades into the thousands. They held the city for five months, fending off helicopters with the sun’s glare off of mirrors and fireworks shot from PVC pipes.

For the most part, the confrontational actions of the Oaxacan revolutionaries stood in contrast to the developing central leadership of APPO, which included more than just anarchist and Indigenous Magónista groups. Leftists of all brands, the PRD (the Party of the Democratic Revolution, Mexico’s mainstream liberal party), and even Stalinists used the revolt to push their agendas and to build political careers. APPO leadership insisted on only non-violent resistance and on October 29th, two days after paramilitaries killed four Oaxacans and an anarchist journalist from New York, Oaxacans painted their hands



white and filled the streets to peacefully halt the procession of thousands of Federal Preventative Police (PFP). Police carried automatic weapons, wore riot gear, and came with tanks that tore through barricades. By the end of the night, the PFP had dislodged the APPO encampment from the Zócalo. Due largely to the leadership’s cowardice, there was little violent resistance. At one point, rebels popped all 4 tires and smashed windows of a bus carrying the PFP, forcing a retreat, but APPO leadership denounced this and other confrontational actions.

On November 2nd, thousands of rebels successfully defended APPO’s main radio station, Radio Universidad, winning an hours-long running battle at the barricades, forcing the PFP to retreat. But one by one, barricades and radio stations fell. On November 25th, APPO called for a mega march to dislodge the PFP from the Zócalo. Police and paramilitaries fired on the march, effectively ending the revolt. 26 died, dozens were detained, and many more went missing. Years of brutal repression ensued, and APPO crumbled over its former leaders’ electioneering, though the struggle continues in local neighborhood assemblies.

The failure of the Oaxacan revolt is the fault of the leadership, who injected cowardly pacifism and veiled authoritarianism into the spontaneous horizontal movement. By failing to realize the value of liberated territory—the entire City of Oaxaca—in a revolutionary struggle and not throwing all resources into its defense, they effectively surrendered the location of the developing revolution. Additionally, while people occupied the media and dislodged the government and police, they did not, for the most part, occupy their workplaces. Though many Oaxacans were and are unemployed, and the predominant local economy is that of tourism and service, most industries were left under the control of the capitalists and out of the hands of the revolution. •

THE GREEK INSURRECTION

by Jake Carman



On Dec. 6, 2008, the Athens police's murder of 15-year-old anarchist Alexandros Grigoropoulos sparked a broad social uprising that raged all month, has been simmering ever since, and is now flaring up again. Before the killing, Greece was already a heavily polarized country. On one side, anarchists strongly influenced workers and youth, maintaining entire "free neighborhoods," such as Exarchia in Athens, where Alexandros was shot. On the other side, there was a far right-wing government and police—including the one who shot Alexandros—who were often members or supporters of fascist organizations like Golden Dawn.

The shooting of Alexandros occurred when Greek Special Forces entered the "free neighborhood" of Exarchia to instigate residents, drawing protests from teens who threw stones at them. The police responded with bullets.

Within a half hour of the murder, thousands of anarchists mobilized and attacked police stations with Molotov cocktails, rocks, and other improvised weapons. By the end of the night, protesters filled the streets of every major city, targeting banks and chain stores in intense riots. The next day, students poured out of schools, organizing marches and demonstrations in the tens of thousands. The cops attacked the enraged youth with tear gas and other implements of social control, exacerbating their thirst for revenge.

In the following days, the riots grew into an uprising. Students occupied their schools, workers called a general strike, and immigrants joined in on the streets. Attacks continued against police, banks, and government ministries. Protesters even torched Parliament's massive Christmas tree in Athens. (See cover photo)

The New York Times reports that by December 12, police had fired 4,600 tear gas canisters, and, after exhausting their supply,

ordered more from Israel. Throughout the following week, anti-authoritarians occupied dozens of media stations, including four major radio stations and three university stations. On December 16, anarchists burst into Greece's state-run news TV studio, interrupting the Prime Minister's speech, and held up a banner that read, "Stop watching, get out onto the streets." On December 17, radical workers occupied the headquarters of the General Confederation of Workers in Greece, accusing the union bureaucrats of selling out, denouncing the media for "the myth that the workers were and are absent" from the insurrection, and calling for the "self-organization of the workers," as well as a general strike. The "Liberated Workers' Zone" held an "Open Workers' Assembly," and long red and black banners hung from the roof down to the bottom of the four-story building. Workers also occupied the "Labor Center" union building in Patras. CNN reported on December 19th, "At least 800 high schools and 200 universities remain shut as thousands of youths have seized the grounds and campuses in protest."

One common thread throughout the uprising, shared with the other big revolts of the decade, was that in the occupied schools, town halls, union buildings, social centers, and in the neighborhoods, people formed assemblies. The assembly at the occupied Polytechnic University of Athens — a long-time center for anarchist organizing — released a statement announcing nightly meetings, declaring,

"In the barricades, the occupations, the demonstrations and the assemblies, we keep alive the memory of Alexandros, but also... all the comrades who were murdered by the State... Our actions, our attempts are the living cells of the insubordinate free world that we dream, without masters and slaves, without police, armies, prisons, and borders."

While the anarchists found themselves at the helm of this insurrection, with their influence swelling enormously, they made up only a fraction of those involved in the revolt. More importantly than the anarchists' numbers, however, anarchist ideas were manifested in hundreds of calls for assemblies and strikes, scrawled on thousands of banners and sides of buildings. The anarchist ideals of self-determination, community power, freedom, and economic justice were widely spread across the struggling populace in the form of a strong anti-authoritarian sentiment.

According to a December 14 poll in the conservative paper Kathimerini, only 20 percent of respondents thought conservative Prime Minister Karamanlis could end the uprising, while even less (17 percent) supported the Socialist opposition party. A Chicago Tribune article on the Kathimerini study said, "The most popular choice of those polled...

was the option of 'nobody.' By Sunday afternoon, there were jokes in Athens cafes about the appeal of Mr. Nobody." In occupied schools, banners read, "Greece is the birthplace of democracy. It will also die here."

Police, unable to contain the brewing rebellion, panicked and continued their violence, engaging the support of fascists from Golden Dawn in attacks on demonstrators. The Center for Strategic Anarchy reported that, "a leaked police report revealed official fears that the current crisis will fuel a recruitment drive for Greece's anarchist movement."

The End Of December and the New Year

A few days before Christmas, many of the young rebels called for a break, promising to return to struggle on Jan. 9. For immigrant workers and others, however, another assault by the rich and powerful on the poor and struggling meant the rebellion would have no Christmas vacation.

On Dec. 22, Konstantina Kouneva, a militant syndicalist, active feminist, and the general secretary of the Cleaners' Union of Athens, was attacked by thugs of her employer, Oikomet. The company has close ties to the Socialist Party (PASOK) and contracts cheap labor to banks, to government buildings, and to the metro system. Kouneva, a Bulgarian immigrant, had been demanding that her fellow workers receive their Christmas bonuses. She was also very active in the Assembly of the Occupied General Workers' Union, and had received a series of threats. The hired goons assaulted her with vitriolic acid, destroying one of her eyes, threatening the other eye and her vocal chords, and putting her in a coma. Her comrades held a protest on Dec. 26 outside Evangelismos Hospital, attacking a police car with rocks. The next day, the Assembly for Solidarity to K. Kouneva occupied the headquarters of the state-owned Athens-Piraeus Electric Railway Company where Kouneva had worked.

At midnight, as the New Year began, "hundreds of protesters gathered outside the central prison of the country in Koridallios, SW Athens, where," according to Libcom.org, "the majority of arrested insurgents are kept pending trial." With fireworks, songs and chants, the protesters and the imprisoned reveled in shared solidarity. In Athens, the rebels again tried to attack the Syntagma Square Christmas tree, disrupting the Mayor's celebration. Marches in solidarity with arrested comrades occurred in Salonica, and in Chania, Crete, and municipal Christmas trees were torched



Above





in Heraklion, Crete and Larissa City. As Libcom.org reports, many more actions rang in the New Year of struggle: "A barrage of attacks against banks and state organizations rocked the country. According to the media, minutes after midnight, eight banks and four car expos in Salonica, and five banks, six shops and one mall in Athens torched down."

On Monday, January 4, the leftist urban

re and Below: November 17th, 2009 Demonstration



guerrilla organization Revolutionary Struggle shot and killed a Riot Police officer in Exarchia. State forces occupied the anarchist neighborhood and unleashed a massive wave of repression. The police closed the area's bars, attacking patrons, harassing and questioning workers, and detaining 72 people. They surrounded and shut down the Polytechnic school for the next two days. According to Libcom.org, after they released all 72 detainees for lack of evidence, "The police shifted its strategy of intimidation by arbitrarily breaking in[to] houses in the wider area and detaining scores of people based on their ideological profile as anarchists," charging five "with ridiculous accusations of 'arms possession' for Swiss knives and decorative Chinese swords."

On Jan. 7, the police broke into the Exarchia home of Stavroula Yannakopoulou, a lawyer who frequently defends radicals. The people of Exarchia marched through their neighborhood, against the police and what they called "the return of Nazi occupation."

On Jan. 9, the vacationing rebels kept their promise and 10,000 poured into Athens for a march. According to the Greek mainstream media, 8,000 police officers confronted the demonstration with tear gas and other weapons, and the protesters retreated to a university.

Demonstrations and attacks on police stations occurred in Athens, Patras, and Thessaloniki that day. Kouneva's comrades ransacked her bosses' headquarters in Thessaloniki. The headquarters of the Lawyers Association in Thessaloniki was also occupied, and the city's Labor Inspection Bureau was attacked in solidarity with Kouneva. In Athens, protesters outraged at the repression in Exarchia, according to Libcom.org, occupied "the Municipal Cultural Center of Byronas...demanding total disarming of the police, immediate release of arrested insurgents, abolition of the anti-terrorist law, end of bosses' terror...and an end to forest demolition for the construction of a bypass in the area."

Radical journalists and other media workers occupied the Athens Union of News Editors, transforming the reformist union's building into a space to confront the capitalist media's control over the truth. "Our main goal is to prevent the bosses from imposing their views about the events," they said on Jan. 10.

During this period, Israel brutally besieged Gaza. A Jan. 10 letter from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine called on the Greek workers to prevent a shipment of US arms from the port of Astakos to Israel, including, "Three hundred and twenty-five 20-foot containers of ammunition, over 3,000 tons, in an emergency shipment of arms to aid the occupation in its ongoing war crimes against the Palestinian people in Gaza." The next day, the Greek Anti-Authoritarian Move-

ment, the anti-war Internationalist Movement, and the Astakos assembly issued a call for protesters to flood the port. Only one day later, Jan. 12, the Greek government called off the shipment.

From rebel media workers in the occupied building of ESIEA on Jan. 10: "The thousands of protesters that filled the streets in Greece on Friday, Jan. 9, proved that the fire of December won't be put out, not by bullets and acid against activists, nor by the ideological terrorism spread by the media these last few days."

December Approaches Again

The unrest continued throughout the year, ultimately leading to the downfall of the conservative government. The October 2009 Presidential Elections brought to power the socialist regime of George Papandreou, the son of the founder of PASOK, the Greek Socialist party. Papandreou publicly claimed that his government is "antiauthoritarians in power," and, Michalis Chrisochoidis, Minister of Public Order, claims that he is "good friends" with numerous anarchists and they agree on many things. However, the day after assuming power, according to Libcom, "the Socialists launched a massive invasion of Exarchia...with mass detentions and brutal intimidation of locals." At 1:30AM, 1,000 officers commenced an ongoing occupation of Exarchia and Downtown Athens.

Soon, students began occupying their schools again. When the State Persecutor in Salonica charged high school students for an occupation, students all over the country claimed their campuses, occupying 35 high-schools in Salonica alone. The high school occupations all across the country, and the fascist attacks on several in Salonica, have been blacked out of the media, a fact the Nuclei of Fire claimed as the reason for their November bombing of the ex-Minister of Education's house. The students have the backing of the National Teachers Union, and police have publicly refused to arrest occupiers, saying it "would only inflame the situation, leading to an automatic reaction on the part of pupils at the mere sight of police." One student at a boycott rally at the gate of the school said, "The results of our mobilisation have encouraged us, as they proved that with collective action nobody can beat us."

On November 17, the 36th anniversary of the anarchist-led Polytechnic Uprising against the colonels' right-wing 1973 junta, police tried to repress the largest march in recent Greek history, headed toward the American Embassy, an institution blamed for the junta. After the march was attacked by police, an anti-authoritarian bloc of 4,000 retreated toward Exarchia, and on the way besieged the Athens Police Headquarters Tower and the Supreme Court. In Exarchia the bloc, joined by resi-

dents, tried to break through the police cordon around the Polytechnic school and built barricades. The police kept all media out of the area and attacked the bloc, detaining 290. At least 13 police officers were wounded. Despite the media blackout of Exarchia, the anarchists broke the siege a few days later and drove the police from the free neighborhood

According to Reuters one banner read, "Remember, remember the 6th of December." It is plain to see that the battle for Greece is not over, as the new leftist government finds itself in as much trouble with the people as the previous one. It is up to the anarchists, anti-authoritarians and other free-minded people of the world to support the ongoing movement in Greece. They will repay us by giving the world a brilliant living example of how to make a free and equitable society. •



Mexico: Agricultural Genocide

by Tlacuilotzin

The Mexican government's authorization to grow transgenic corn in Mexico should be considered a crime of historical proportions. A bureaucrat's signature has done away with 10,000 years of collective labor. There is an unbridgeable chasm between what is at stake for those who made this decision and those who will suffer the consequences.

There's simply no argument that would justify dismissing the moratorium that was in place for the last 10 years preventing the growing of transgenic corn in Mexico. All of the factors that were considered when the moratorium was enacted are extant or have intensified. The Secretaries of Agriculture and Environment claim this decision will only apply to experimental growing plots, and that biosafety measures will be observed, but the whole process has been plagued by irregularities from the get-go. The government ignored just about every single opinion that came from scientific and technical groups, as well as from social and civic organizations, simply because they were critical of the push to infect the fields with industrially created transgenic mutations. They also ignored the overwhelming numbers of protests and peti-

tions from all sectors of society, nationally and internationally. They turned a deaf ear to the denunciations, manifestations, and the scientific, economical, political, social, cultural, historical, and geographical perspectives voiced against allowing the introduction of transgenic corn in Mexico.

In truth, there is no strong logic behind the decision to plant transgenic seed: it carries enormous risks without clear advantages. Studies show that transgenic crops yield less than conventional ones, require more chemicals, have created at least a dozen herbicide-resistant weeds, generated resistance from plague insects they were designed to combat, and cost far more than any other seed. Medical associations worldwide have encouraged us to avoid consuming transgenics, due to evidence that they cause serious health problems.

The negative effects of transgenic crops are established facts, but much more is at risk in Mexico. The inevitable contamination of seeds with transgenics that will occur sooner or later will seriously affect the corn's genetic reservoirs for the whole planet. Mexico originated corn and maintains astounding diversity in its crops. On a local level, corn is THE central element for Indigenous culture and economy. This decision is yet another direct, neocolonial attack on their heritage and wellbeing.

Arrogantly, the news came on October 16th, Sovereign Sustenance World Day, a token of cynicism from those rushing to sell out the country to transnationals. As a response, and with overwhelming support, La Via Campesina (The Peasant Way) launched a worldwide campaign against Monsanto, the biotechnology giants who bought this moratorium dismissal. All over the world, similar battles are being fought, principally by the most destitute, against transnationals seeking complete control of the earth and its resources. Transnats and governments are up for a rude awakening if they think this new act of conquest will go unanswered. WE will show them what we're made of. •

Innocent Until Proven Guilty: The Case of Tarek Mehanna

by Jeff Reinhardt

"Innocent until proven guilty." This legal doctrine of the US and much of world has too often been overlooked in the name of fighting the "war on terror." In our post-9/11 world, it is a widely accepted notion that devout Muslims are conspiring to commit acts of terrorism and violence. The legal system, backed by public opinion, can easily hold Muslims for crimes that are connected to the defendants with little or no evidence, and Massachusetts is not immune to this pattern. The case against a Muslim man, Tarek Mehanna exhibits this in a most egregious fashion.

Tarek Mehanna, 27, was arrested October 21st during a 5AM FBI raid on his and his family's home in Sudbury. He has since been kept in solitary confinement at the Plymouth House of Correction. Mehanna faces charges of aiding terrorists and conspiring to commit acts of terrorism at home and abroad against civilians and US officials. If convicted, he could be spending the rest of his life in jail. He has pleaded not guilty to all charges thus far.

The mainstream media condemned Mehanna from the outset, painting a picture of a wannabe terrorist who had tried many times to kill in the name of "Jihad," but was ultimately a failure. According to the FBI affidavit, Mehanna and a friend had attempted to join a "jihadist training camp" in Yemen, in 2004, but were rejected. The FBI also claims that the plans of the two to carry out attacks were thwarted when their attempts to purchase automatic weapons failed. These claims inspired a cruel mockery from the mainstream press. The AP described Mehanna as an "incompetent wannabe," and accused him of plotting to kill US troops overseas and US officials at home. The Boston Globe and Herald, the local outlets that broke the news, also based most of their description of Mehanna on the FBI affidavit rather than attempting to describe Tarek Mehanna as a person with a real life.

The facts of the case speak loudly enough. Mehanna had no prior convictions before his first arrest last year for supposedly lying to FBI agents (more on that later). There is no physical evidence or crime that has actually been committed, just claims. The FBI's most recent evidence is from 2006, but they waited to arrest him (the first time) until 2008, the day before Mehanna was planning to leave the country to start a new job in Saudi Arabia. What case does the FBI have, and how did it come about?

Mehanna is a deeply religious man, making him an easy target for the FBI and the mainstream media. He holds a PharmD from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy (related to his job offer in Saudi Arabia) and teaches elementary school. His students and his community see him as a mentor. As a prominent, highly respected member of Greater Boston's Muslim community who gives numerous lectures and translates religious texts, outsiders could easily misrepresent him.

The FBI seized Mehanna's computer, which they now claim holds information on his terrorist plot, as well as his writings, which have been denounced as "extremist" and calling for violent "jihad."

On inspection of Mehanna's blog (<http://iskandrani.wordpress.com>), the casual observer may note the peaceful and reflective tone of Mehanna's writing. Where he mentions Jihad, he directly contradicts the "extremist" attitude of "holy war" that has precipitated some violence and widespread profiling of Muslims. Mehanna writes on a blog post titled, "The Purpose of Jihad," from February 9, 2009:

...and this is from the greatest of qualities of Islam, since the goal of the Jihad in this religion is not simply to control people or bring them under the submission of others, nor is the goal death and destruction, nor is it oppression under the guise of justice (as it is the goal of the wars fought by those who have strayed from the correct religion). And because of this, its results have differed from others. So, the results of the Jihad of Islam are the spreading of justice and mercy and goodness and happiness and success and righteousness, and the results of others are death and destruction and enslaving the creation and oppressing them in regards to their blood and wealth and lives.

Mehanna preaches the proliferation of justice, mercy, goodness, and happiness. Much of Mehanna's writing, while overtly religious, calls for human understanding, peace, and avoiding violent or "satanic" doctrines. The word "jihad" in itself does not even translate to "holy war," but rather "struggle" whether internal or external, and is an important concept within Islam.

Blog posts aside, the prosecution's only evidence is the 55-page FBI affidavit, which is based on testimony from two cooperating

witnesses. The FBI could easily have used these witnesses to entrap Mehanna; the affidavit claims that both their testimonies rely on "personal knowledge, including actions and statements by Mehanna." The affidavit also relies on testimony from a third witness: Daniel Maldonado, who is now serving a 10-year sentence for similarly false conspiracy charges, and whose phone conversations with Mehanna the FBI has supposedly recorded. The two allegedly used code words pertaining to sandwiches that actually meant "jihad."

Mehanna's attorney, Jay Carney, revealed that FBI agents had been attempting to use Mehanna as an informant for years, using blackmail to try to get him to snitch on his Muslim community. The FBI harassment actually precipitated Mehanna's first arrest in December 2008. He was charged with



misleading the FBI as to the whereabouts of Daniel Maldonado. They claim Mehanna knew that Maldonado was in Somalia and lied to FBI agents from the Joint Terrorism Task Force about his location. They arrested Mehanna and held him on trumped up charges resulting in a bail of \$1,250,000. His family desperately got the money together to free their son from jail. From that point on, Mehanna continued to teach science and lived a quiet life under his imposed curfew.

New allegations have been made with no further evidence regarding the previous arrest and Mehanna has been denied bail despite an outcry of public support. During his bail hearing on November 12, a crowd exceeding 150 packed the courtroom and flooded the hall to show support for Tariq Mehanna. Supporters included his students and their parents, co-workers, Muslim community members, college classmates, friends, fam-

ily, political activists, and even out-of-state supporters. Letters describing Mehanna's character were given to Judge Leo T. Sorokin, some from students saying that he had taught them the importance of non-violence.

The prosecutor, Assistant US Attorney Aloke S. Chakravart, claimed that Mehanna was leading a "double life" that connected him to Al Qaeda. The prosecution also claimed that while free speech is protected (such as declarations to kill other people) under the first amendment, Mehanna had committed actions that suggested an immediate threat. At the end of the hearing, Sorokin decided to deliberate further on whether to offer bail.

On November 19, Judge Sorokin decided that Mehanna would remain held without bail for having "demonstrated his ongoing support of terrorism, both by his own recorded statements and by investing his time and effort in promoting terrorism."

This parade of injustices marches to the relentless drum of xenophobic racism against Muslims, beaten by the mainstream media, and by several blogs who also make unsubstantiated claims about Mehanna. Yet here in Boston, activists, Muslims, community members, friends, students, co-workers, and the intersections of the above have banded together to help get their loving friend out of prison.

Mehanna recently wrote his first letter from prison this past week. In it he talks about the in-

justices of the "correctional" system and is thankful for what he does have. He has supporters; believers in justice, who have put aside the relentless hum of the media, and used their own reasoning to support Mehanna.

You can help, too. Tariq's attorney, Jay Carney, stated we can help Tariq's case by sending emails/letters of support, as soon as possible, for Tariq, concerning Tariq's good character. We may send these to Atty Steven R. Morrison, email:

smorrison@CarneyBassil.com, or to Atty Steven R. Morrison, Carney & Bassil, 20ParkPlaza,Suite1405,Boston,MA02116.

Also, you can send Tariq mail directly through his support website. Visit <http://www.freetarek.com>. Or you can write:

Tarek Mehanna ID#50660 Unit GE103
Plymouth County Correctional Facility 26
Longpond Road Plymouth, MA 02360 •

Reports and Reviews



A New Home for the Lucy Parsons Center

by Sublett

The Lucy Parsons Center, Boston's awesomest collectively run, all volunteer radical bookstore and community meeting space, has purchased a new home. The new space is a commercial condo in Boston's Jamaica Plain neighborhood. A substantial amount of work will need to be done on the new store, including moving the bathroom to the back to make more room, making the space wheelchair accessible, cleaning a lot of junk out of the basement and building new bookshelves. The collective hopes to move into the new store by March.

This move will put the LPC on a sounder financial footing, as they will no longer have to pay rent on their current South End location, and the purchase price of the new condo was covered by money already in their dedicated building fund. In addition, sales are expected to increase in a neighborhood with fewer yuppies.

The move comes as the Center is celebrating its fortieth anniversary. •

Monthly Events:

First and Third Monday:

Papercut Zine Library meeting, 7:30pm, Contact papercut@riseup.net for location

First Tuesday of Every Month:

BAAM public meeting, 7pm, Lucy Parsons Center, 549 Columbus Ave. Open meetings feature an introduction to BAAM, reportbacks, and workshops.

Second Tuesday of Every Month:

Anarchist Black Cross meeting (defense and prison abolition group), 8pm, email bostonabc@riseup.net for location.

Every Wednesday:

Free Radical Film Nights, 7pm, Lucy Parsons Center, 549 Columbus Ave.

Second Sunday of Every Month:

2pm Industrial Workers of the World meeting, Lucy Parsons Center, 549 Columbus Ave, Boston

Every Friday:

Food Not Bombs free community meal, 4-6pm, Boston Common, Park St T Stop, Boston

Every Sunday:

Food Not Bombs free community meal, 5-7pm Central Square Cambridge, MA

Wednesday, December 2nd:

Boston Protests Sending More Troops to Afghanistan. If Obama calls for an increase in troops to Afghanistan there will be a protest. Meet, at the Brewer Fountain near the Park St. T stop at 5pm. There will be a moving picket line from 5-7pm. Sponsored by Justice with Peace and the Stop the Wars Coalition.

Saturday, December 5th:

Eyes Wide Open: State, Politics and the Alternatives. Call for a joint reflection on politics, the state and the alternatives. A free, egalitarian and horizontal gathering of independently minded activists. Snell Library, Room 090, Northeastern University Main Campus, Boston, MA. 1pm.

Sunday, December 6th:

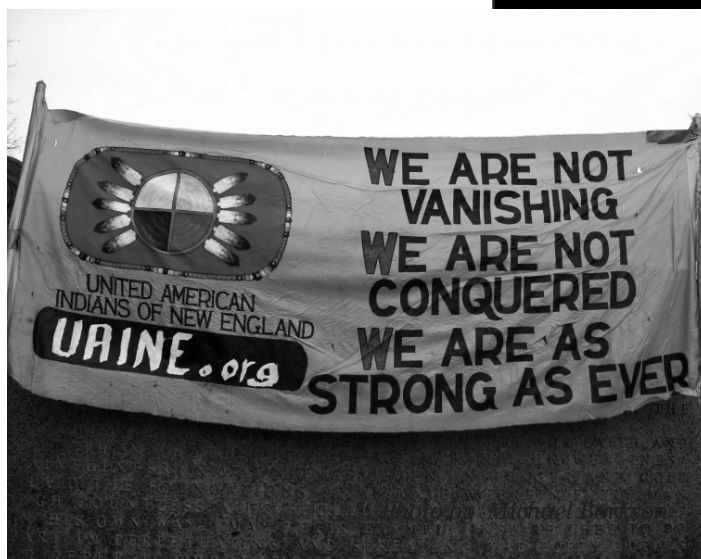
Greek Solidarity Demo. It's been one year since the uprising in Greece. Join local radicals in a march of solidarity with the anti-authoritarian movement in Greece starting at 4pm in Copley Square and going to the Greek consulate.

Also Sunday, December 6th:

Rising Tide Potluck, Workshop, and Meet and Greet. 6pm at the Lucy Parsons Center, 549 Columbus Ave, Boston, MA. After the rally come to the LPC to have a potluck dinner followed by a workshop and a Rising Tide meeting. All are welcome.

Thursday, December 10th:

Know Your Rights and a panel with



The National Day of Mourning in Plymouth, MA

Since 1970, Native Americans have gathered at noon on Cole's Hill in Plymouth to commemorate a National Day of Mourning on the US thanksgiving holiday. Many Native Americans do not celebrate the arrival of the Pilgrims and other European settlers. Thanksgiving day is a reminder of the genocide of millions of Native people, the theft of Native lands, and the relentless assault on Native culture. Participants in National Day of Mourning honor Native ancestors and the struggles of Native peoples to survive today. It is a day of remembrance and spiritual connection as well as a protest of the racism and oppression which Native Americans continue to experience. The day was organized by United American Indians of New England.

CALENDAR: GET INVOLVED

a focus on the Muslim community in Boston. Sponsored by the Jericho and the Free Tariq Committee. A panel will be speaking on Tariq Mehanna's situation and state repression in the Muslim community, as well as other communities such as the Black Panthers, Puerto Rican independence movements, and here in Boston. Lewis Room for Dec 10 from 6:30-8:30, Cambridge Public Library, 45 Pearl Street Cambridge, MA.

Also, Thursday December 10th: **Jobs With Justice Hearing on Immigrant Workers' Rights.** Help us celebrate the 61st Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and commit ourselves to furthering human rights in the workplace at a Workers' Rights Board Hearing. Free event at St. Paul's Cathedral, 138 Tremont St, Boston. 3-5:30pm.

Monday, December 14th: **Annual Dorchester People for Peace Holiday Party.** Join us to honor the Association of Haitian Women of Boston and Women in Black at the Vietnamese American Community Center, 42 Charles St, Fields Corner at 6pm. We need volunteers to bring food and beverages for our usual sumptuous dinner, to call DPP members and community relations and invite them. For more info visit dotpeace.org

Weekend of December 19th-20th: **The 9th General Assembly of the Northeast Anarchist Network in Philly.** A general meeting with anarchists from the

larger region. Meetings and workshops all weekend long.

January 25-31st: **Bread and Puppet Comes to Boston at the Boston Center for the Arts.** The political theater troupe makes its annual stop

in Boston. Volunteers should show up on the 25th to begin rehearsing for the show. Performances start on the night of the 27th and go until the 31st. Visit breadandpuppet.org for more info. The BCA cyclorama is located at 539 Tremont St, Boston, MA. All shows are \$12, unless you're in them.



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Order "Certain Days 2010" Freedom for Political Prisoners Calendar from ABC. With over 40 full-color pages, a great gift. This year's theme is indigenous resistance. Email bostonabc@riseup.net to buy. We accept paypal and cash. \$12.



REMEMBER SACCO & VANZETTI BUTTONS!

Commemorative buttons, \$2 each, \$3 for the pair. Email to order: info@saccoandvanzetti.org

HELP US SAVE TREES! (PAPER AND MONEY) FOR A FREE EMAIL SUBSCRIPTION, CONTACT JAKE: TRENCHESFULLOFPOETS@RISEUP.NET

Contributors to this month's issue:

- Adrienne
- Dave W.
- Jake Carman
- James Herod
- Jeff Reinhardt
- Laila
- Michael Borkson
- Sublett
- Tlacuilotzin
- Toma



What is Anarchism?

Anarchism is the theory and practice of a human society organizing without hierarchy, authority and oppression. This means that all people have equal access to the decision-making process and to the products of their collective labor. Anarchy can be described as true, direct democracy. It is horizontal: i.e. workers working together without bosses, neighbors organizing housing and neighborhoods without landlords, and people making decisions without politicians. There are many different ideas on how to get there and what exactly it will look like. We can talk all we want, but only a truly free and revolutionary people will be able to decide what their revolution will look like. So comrades, let's get to work!

WWW.BAAMBOSTON.ORG

REMEMBER, REMEMBER, THE 6TH OF DECEMBER
Northeast Day of Actions in Solidarity
with the Greek Anti-Authoritarian Movemet
AGAINST STATE REPRESSION, FROM THE LEFT OR RIGHT

The Greek insurrection began almost a year ago. As we approach the anniversary, we must ask ourselves what happened, what's happening, what failed, and, most importantly, what worked? As we reflect, we must also recognize our roles as U.S. anarchists in solidarity with this insurrection. We can all remember how we felt last year when we heard Alexi got shot and that Athens was burning. We held solidarity actions then, and we must demonstrate again. The Greek insurrection led to the fall of the right-wing government and the election of a socialist government. While its president calls it "antiauthoritarians in power," and the Minister of Public Order claims to have many anarchists as good friends, on the new administration's first day, the Greek Socialist Party invaded the anarchist and



anti-authoritarian neighborhood of Exarchia in Central Athens. Since then, they've kept their repression of anarchists constant. The socialist administration attacked November 17th demonstrations commemorating the 1973 rising against the military junta, and have maintained a media blackout in Exarchia, whose residents they continue to raid, detain, arrest, and pummel. These actions will not go unpunished. Regardless, the movement in Greece is only gaining steam, and the stage is set for another Greek December to remember. It is a time to once again muster up the feelings of joy in solidarity with our comrades in Greece in order to hold another day of solidarity on Sunday December 6th, 2009 the anniversary of Alexi's death. We will hold actions and demos at Greek consulates, school occupations, and candle lit vigils so the spirits of our comrades are not forgotten.

**In Boston, we will meet on the Copley Square green
at 4pm and march to the consulate building (on
Beacon st, between Arlington and Charles st)**

Sponsors: The Boston Anti-Authoritarian Movement
To Endorse this Day of Actions, email Trenchesfullofpoets@riseup.net

BaamBoston.org, NeAnarchist.Net